

# ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

E-cigarettes were first introduced in China in 2004. Today there are numerous companies producing e cigarettes for retail and internet sales. In the US e cigarettes are gaining in popularity as an alternative to tobacco cigarettes, especially to youth who are attracted to its high tech appearance. An e-cigarette emits vapor, not smoke, and uses a battery, not a lighter. An electrical coil inside the device warms a replaceable cartridge that is soaked with nicotine. The coil vaporizes the nicotine, which is then inhaled by the user. Flavors such as chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, cherry, mint and tobacco can be added to the cartridge.

E cigarettes are not regulated by the FDA. The exact amounts of nicotine and other added chemicals remain uncertain. During a limited study in 2009 the FDA did find levels of carcinogens and toxic chemicals, such as diethylene glycol (an ingredient used in antifreeze), In 2011 the CDC acknowledged that e-cigarettes appear to have far fewer of the toxins found in traditional cigarettes. Public health officials argue the long-term effects of this unregulated products are unknown and require more research.

E cigarette companies promote their cigarettes as a safer product as they have less nicotine than a tobacco cigarettes. These cigarettes allow people to mimic their traditional smoking behavior while inhaling the nicotine they crave without all the other harmful substances. E cigarette advocates believe the E-cigarettes as a way to cut down on smoking or an aid to quit completely. There is though no data to date that E-cigarettes are an equal or better than nicotine replacement therapies such as the patches and gums.

The health risks associated with nicotine are well documented. No nicotine is good nicotine. For a healthier and safer life, it is best to say no to all nicotine products including electronic cigarettes



Mayo Clinic: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

U S Food and Drug Administration: [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)